

T V A S



NORTH MIDLANDS

**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,
Chilcote, Leicestershire**

Archaeological Earthwork Survey

by Helen Daniel

Site Code NRC 19/108

(SK 2851 1149)

**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,
Chilcote, Leicestershire**

**An Archaeological Earthwork Survey
for Avalon Heritage**

by Helen Daniel

TVAS North Midlands

Site Code NRC 19/108

July 2019

Summary

Site name: Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire

Grid reference: SK 2851 1149

Site activity: Earthwork Survey

Date and duration of project: 23 July 2019

Project coordinator: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Helen Daniel

Site code: NRC 19/108

Area of site: c. 0.2 hectares

Summary of results: A parcel of land opposite Lower Farm House on Netherseal Road was subject to an earthwork survey which revealed two features, neither of which is thought to be of archaeological significance. In addition, LiDAR data for the site identified a number of features but none which show a coherent pattern, although there are significantly more earthworks within the immediate landscape surrounding the site.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at TVAS North Midlands and will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums in due course.

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford	08.08.19
	Steve Preston	07.08.19

Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire An Archaeological Earthwork Survey

by Helen Daniel

Report 19/108

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological earthwork survey carried out at land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire (SK 2851 1149) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mrs Helen Martin-Bacon of Avalon Heritage Limited, Dairyhouse Lane, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2PW on behalf of Mr and Mrs Hancocks of 4 Jewsbury Avenue, Measham, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE12 7LE.

Outline planning permission (18/02262/VCU) has been granted by North West Leicestershire District Council for the erection of a detached dwelling on a parcel of land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road, Chilcote. The consent is subject to a condition (13), which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019) and North West Leicestershire District Council's policies on archaeology. It was determined that the investigation would take the form, initially, of an earthwork survey, for incorporation into an archaeological impact assessment.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by the County Archaeologist, Mr Richard Clark. The fieldwork was undertaken by Helen Daniel on 23rd July 2019 and the site code is NRC 19/108. The archive is presently held at TVAS North Midlands, Stoke-on-Trent and will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the north side of Netherseal Road at its junction with Church Lane and No Man's Heath Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire and is c.8km south of the town of Swadlincote and c.30km west of the city of Leicester (Fig. 1). The proposed development area comprises an irregular parcel of land measuring c.0.2ha in area (Fig. 2), currently under pasture and situated approximately 800m south-east of the River Mease. The site slopes from 83m above Ordnance Datum along its eastern boundary down to 77m aOD at its south-western corner. The underlying geology is recorded as Helsby Sandstone Formation - Mudstone (BGS 2019).

Archaeological background

The village of Chilcote is first recorded in Domesday Book as *Cildecote* (Williams and Martin 2002). At this time it was part of the county of Derbyshire, becoming part of Leicestershire in 1897 and is located near No Man's Heath, the point at which the four counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire meet. The setting of the heritage assets has recently been evaluated (Heath 2017) and is summarized below.

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of Chilcote (HER ref.: MLE16709), in an area of earthwork remains that have been associated with the former village and the post-medieval park that is illustrated on a 1776 plan, lying directly west of the site. It is possible that buried archaeological remains, indicative of the establishment, settlement and probable clearance of the settlement to make way for the park, may survive in the development area (Heath 2017).

In addition to the possible buried archaeological remains, there are also four Grade II listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the site. Hurst Farmhouse and Hurst Lodge (MLE10816) are located around 60m east of the site and are sub-divided from the former farmhouse which dates from *c.*1835. The original appearances of these buildings are still very perceptible and having a prominent position within the village, retain their historic relationship with the village as one of its main farmhouses. Their name is taken from the low hill upon which this part of the village is seated (Heath 2017). Rock Farmhouse (MLE10817) is situated around 80m south-east of the proposal site, dating from the 18th century and retaining many original features. St Matthew's Church (MLE10815) stands approximately 60m to the south-west of the site and although altered in the 19th century, has medieval origins with the retention of some original carved roof timbers.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the fieldwork was to determine the extent, form and possible character of any earthworks situated within the area of development, in line with Historic England guidance (HE 2017), in order to assess the potential archaeological impact of the proposal.

A topographical survey of the earthworks was undertaken using a Trimble Geo7x hand-held GNSS system with sub-decimetre accuracy. Recordings were taken of spot heights, any breaks of slope and bases of slope, along with profiles across any earthworks. Notes were taken regarding the site conditions, the earthworks and any other features worthy of comment. Earthworks were surveyed to allow an interpretation plan to be produced, illustrated as a hachure plan. The resulting data was processed with GPS Pathfinder Office and is geo-referenced.

All results will be archived. A photographic record was also made of the site, capturing images of the earthworks and site conditions at the time of the survey. The location of all photographic views was recorded and a selection of these views are included on Plates 1-4.

Earthwork Survey Results and Description

This section discusses the form, possible date and function of the earthworks recorded during the course of the survey. The resulting information has been used to produce a hachured interpretation plan (Figs 2 and 3) and section profiles of the earthworks (Fig. 4).

The site conditions were good, with very warm, dry and sunny weather. The site was under grass pasture which was not mown and did not have livestock present and the western site boundary was only partially marked.

The development area contained two separate areas of visible earthworks. The most apparent of these earthwork features is an obvious slope which covers the majority of the site: a few metres from the site's eastern boundary the ground drops off quite sharply towards the west, dropping approximately 4m to the ground level of the field entrance. This feature is relatively uniform along its length and does not appear to be related to the smaller earthworks noted near the field entrance in the south-west. The position and form of this feature suggest that it is the edge of the natural low hillock upon which Hurst Farmhouse and Hurst Lodge are situated.

The other area of earthworks is located immediately inside the entrance to the field. This consists of two slight depressions sloping from north to south, with just over a metre in height between them. It was noted that the curved shape of these banks mirrored the shape of the field boundary at this point and it seems likely from the form and shallow depth of these features that they are related to livestock management and movement taking place just inside the entrance of the field.

LiDAR

LiDAR data tile sk2811_DTM_1m was downloaded from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs website (DEFRA 2019) and added to a Geographical Information System programme, QGIS. The tile gave complete coverage of the site.

Terrain analysis was carried out in QGIS using the 'hillshade' function. Virtual shade plot files with a vertical angle of 15° from the earth's surface were created at every 45° from azimuth 0° to 315° with vertical settings varying from z=1 to z=3. A selection of the most informative plots is shown in Figure 5. It should be

noted that the mapping of features is not precise as the pseudo light source creates a 'shadow' which displaces them in a direction opposite to it. The results were compared with modern ordnance survey data to ensure that extant features were not represented wrongly as of potential archaeological significance.

The area to the west of the site is rich in broad linear trends (Fig. 6: A), probably indicative of multiphase earthworks. The area within the site has a busy appearance and some distinct lines (Fig. 6: B) but there are no coherent patterns.

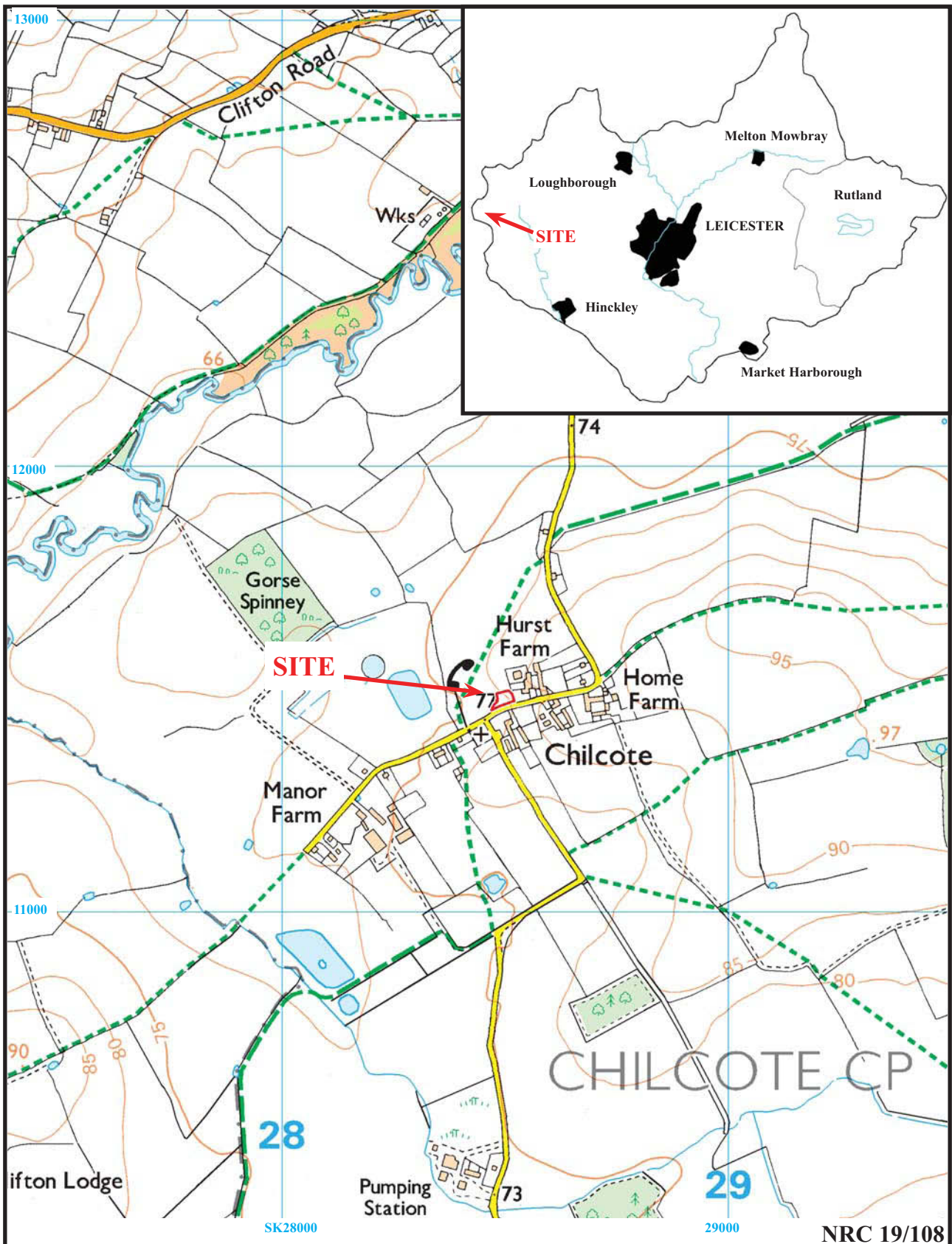
Discussion and Conclusions

The earthwork survey results identified two features; a large sloped area and a smaller shallow slope, neither of which appears to be of any potential archaeological interest. The LiDAR data and interpretation also identified that the site has earthwork features but was unable to discern any coherent pattern within the site boundary, although the larger field within which the site sits has more extensive earthworks which may indicate a multi-phase site, possibly related to the earlier historic village core.

The site is dominated by the steep slope from the eastern boundary which appears to be natural and to be a continuation of the small prominence on which the nearby farmhouse is situated. The other features are quite shallow and do not appear to relate to any archaeological features. These shallow earthworks are located in the corner of the site, near to the field entrance, where the site narrows to less than 10m and mirror the shape of the boundary at this point. Therefore it seems likely that they are a result of livestock movement into and out of the field, which over time has resulted in rutting in this restricted area.

References

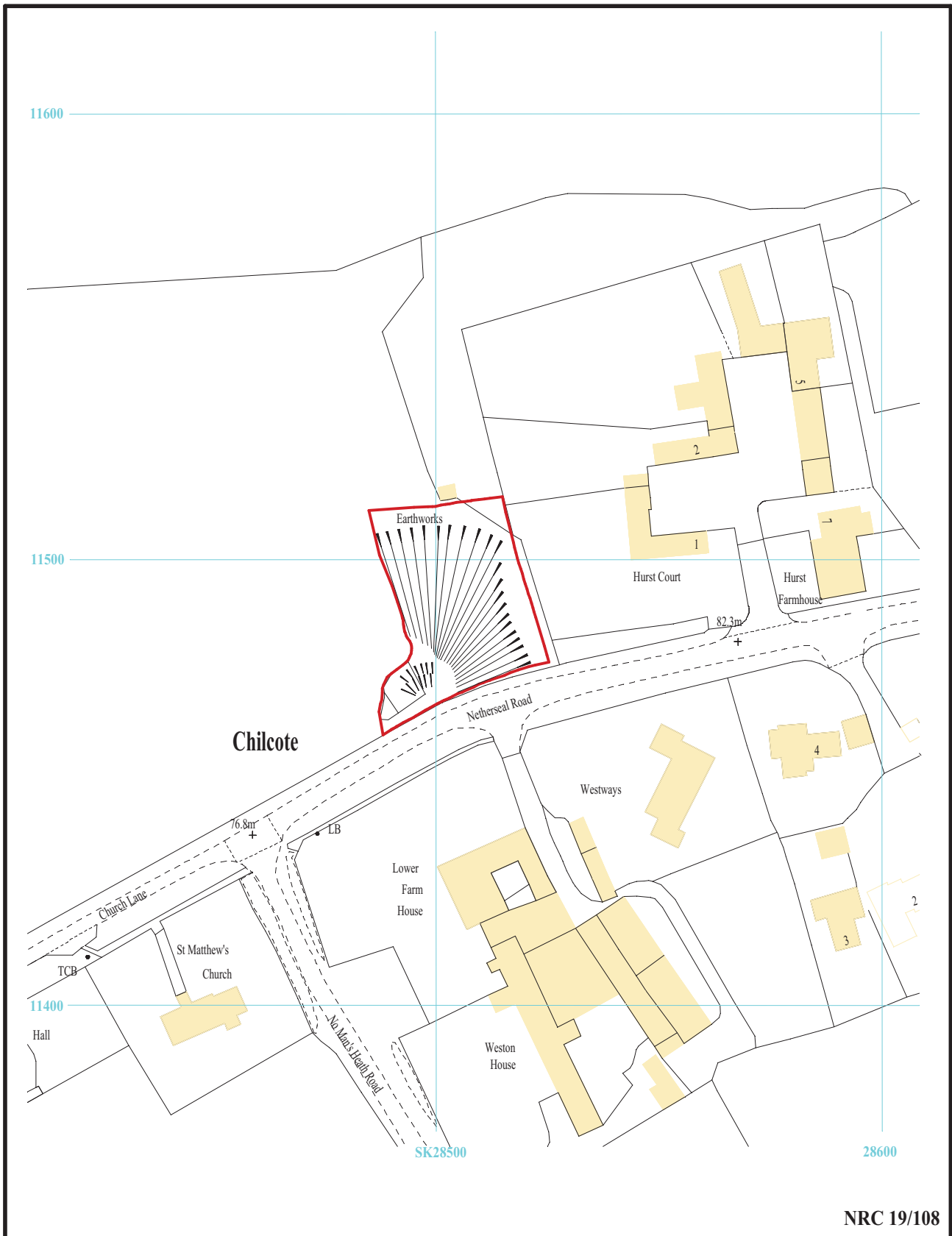
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**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road
 Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019
 Archaeological Earthwork Survey**
 Figure 1. Location of site within Chilcote and Leicestershire.

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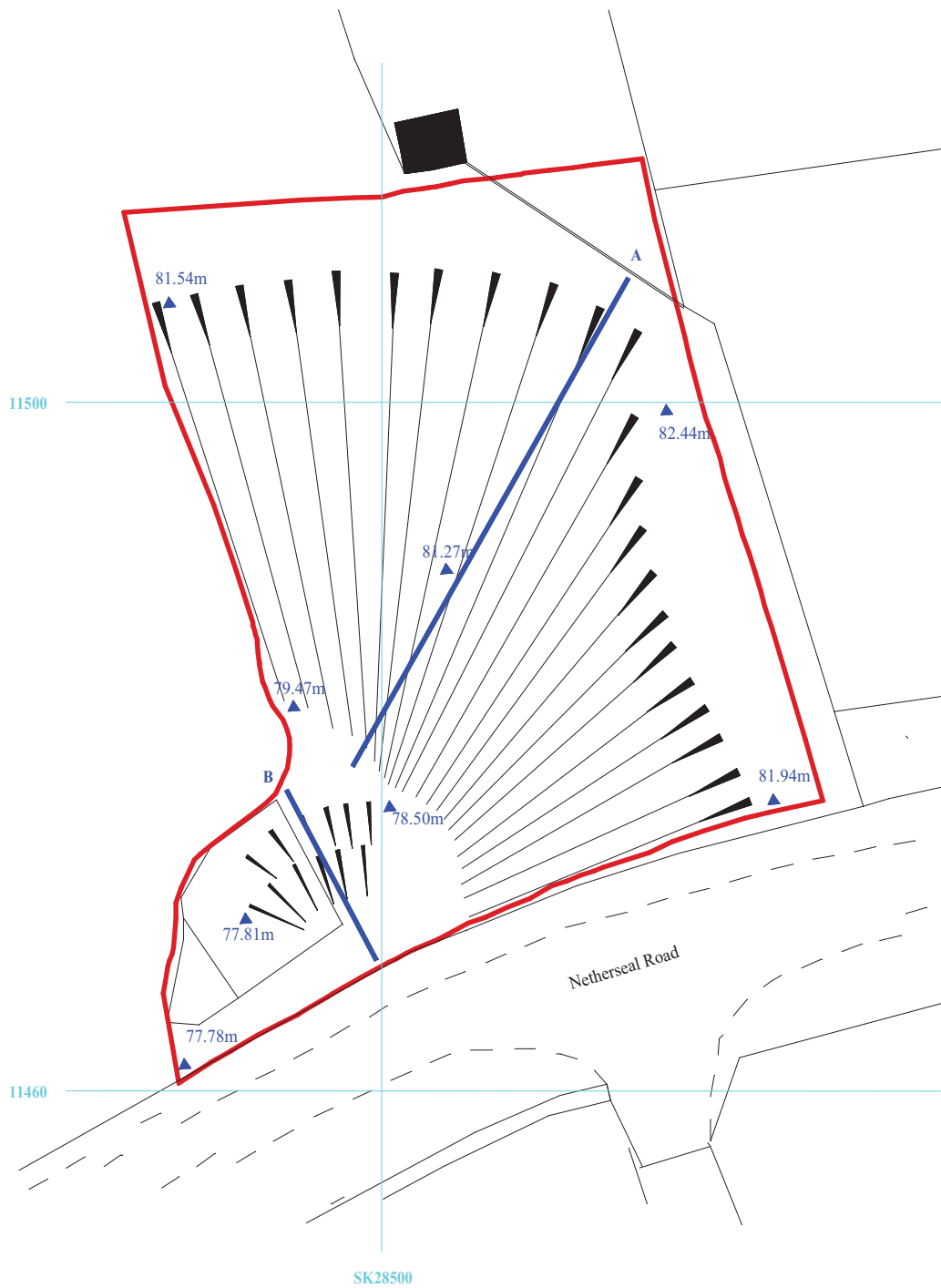


NRC 19/108

**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,
Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019
Archaeological Earthwork Survey**

Figure 2. Site plan with survey results.





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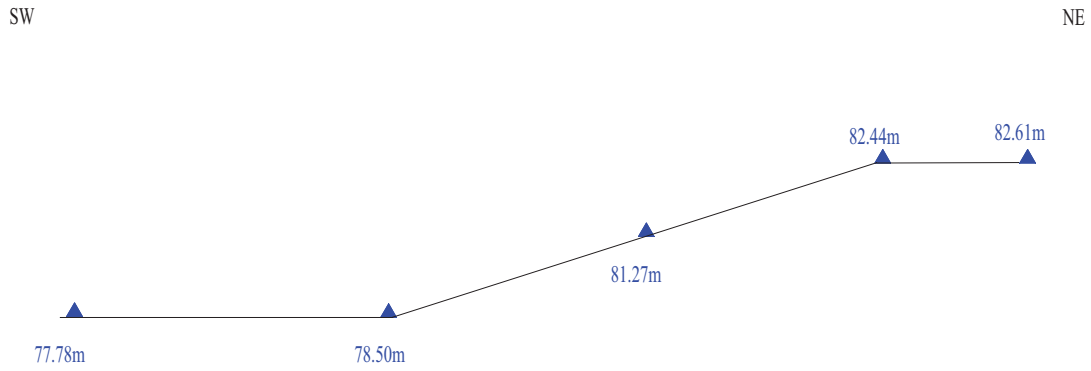


**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,
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Archaeological Earthwork Survey**

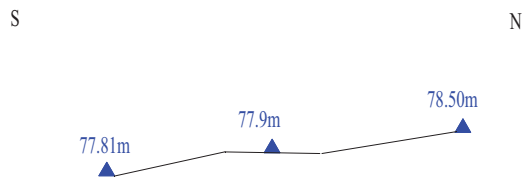
Figure 3. Detailed site plan showing earthworks, locations of profile drawings and spot heights.



A: Profile of earthwork slope in the east of site



B: Profile of earthworks in south, near field entrance

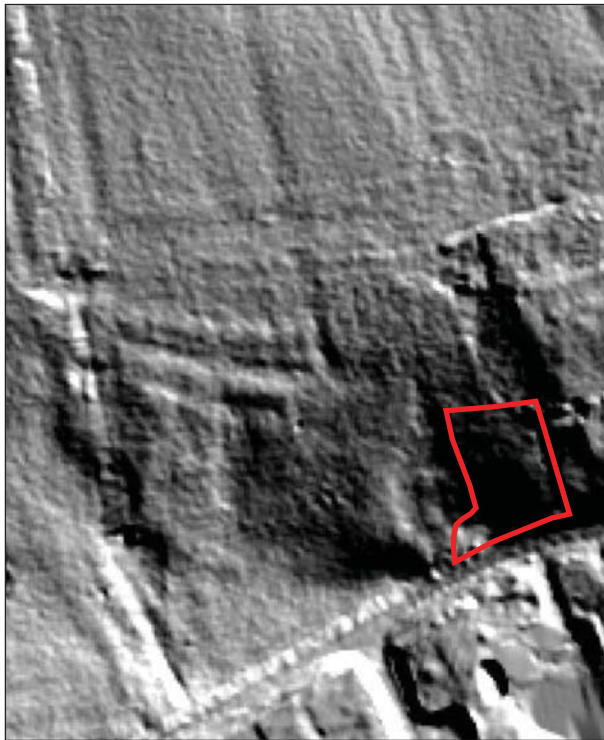


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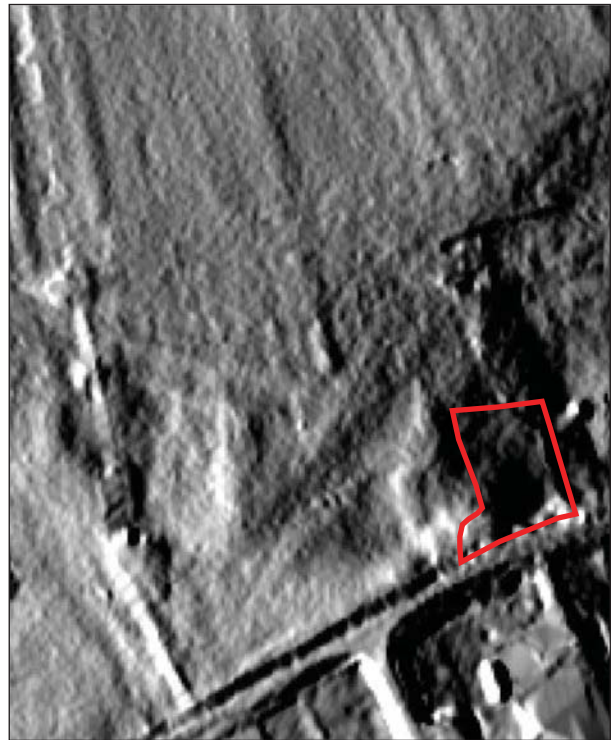
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Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019
Archaeological Earthwork Survey

Figure 4. Profile of earthworks

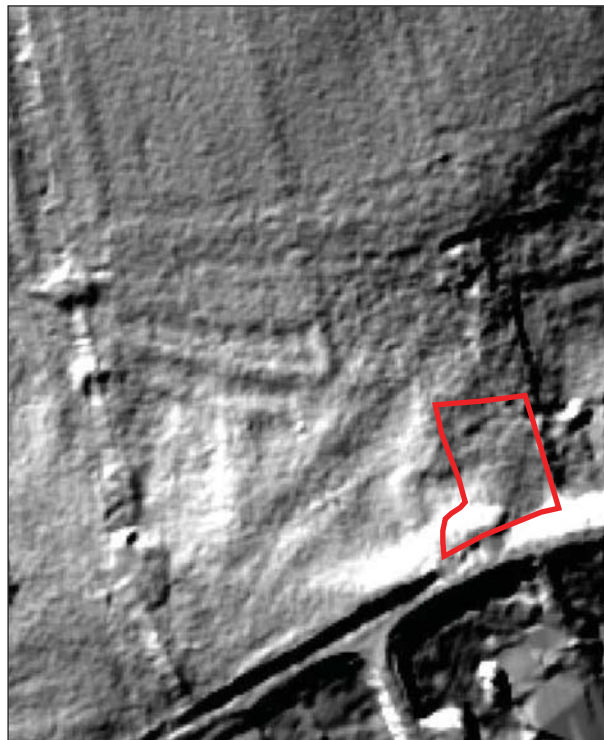




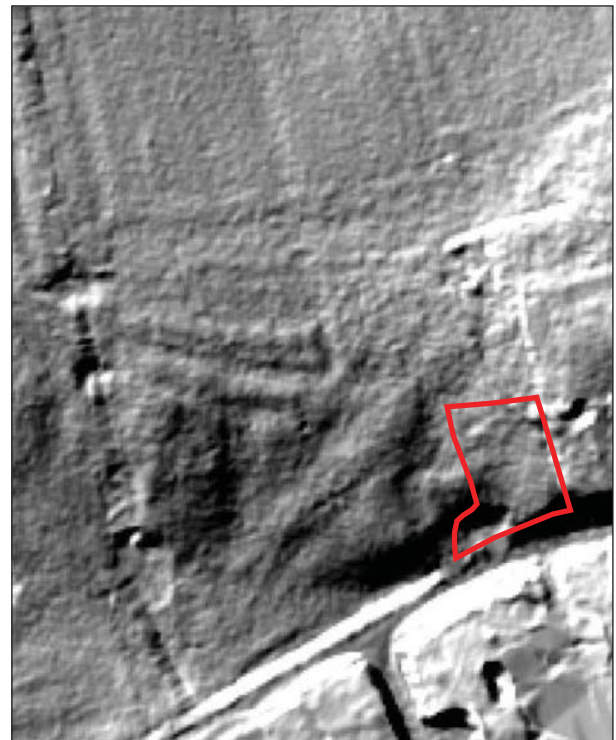
a. Azimuth 45°, vertical angle 15°.



b. Azimuth 90°, vertical angle 15°.



c. Azimuth 135°, vertical angle 15°.



d. Azimuth 315°, vertical angle 15°.

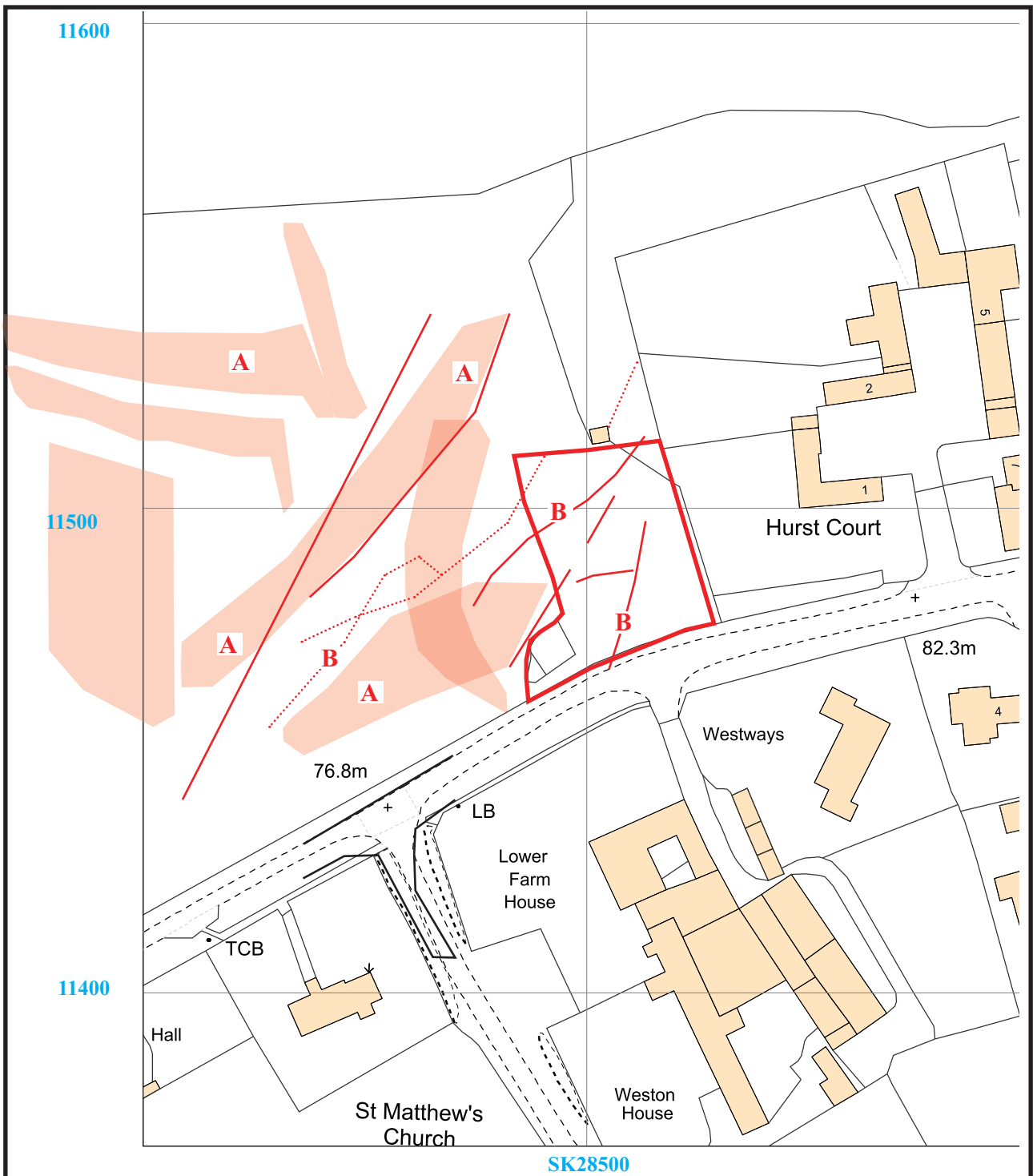
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Figure 5. Lidar 'hillshade' gray scale plots.
No scale





NRC 19/108



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Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019**
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 Figure 6. Interpretation of Lidar images,
 Superimposed on Ordnance Survey Master Map, 2019.
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Plate 1. View east towards the western boundary of the proposal site.



Plate 2. View north-east showing western and southern boundary of the proposal site



Plate 3. View west from the eastern boundary of the proposal site.



Plate 4. View south-west towards St Matthew's church.

NRC 19/108

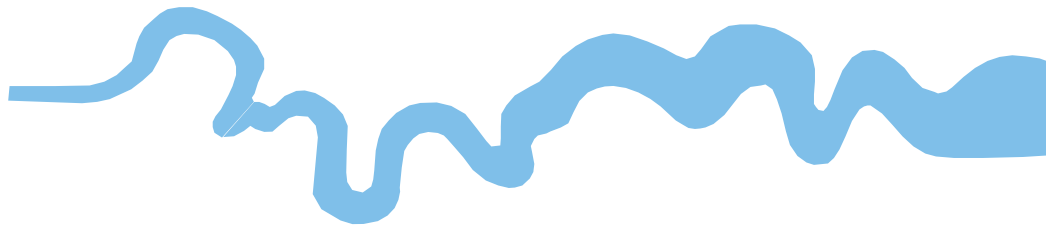
**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road
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Archaeological Earthwork Survey
Plates 1 to 4.**



TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





**TVAS (North Midlands),
2b Stanton Road, Meir,
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 6DD**

**Tel: 01782 595648
Email: northmidlands@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk/northmidlands**

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